

Environmental Working Group Newsletter

It isn't easy being green. — Kermit the Frog

Let the Environmental Working Group make being green a little bit easier

Our tri-annual newsletter will help you with tips about how to live a more environmentally-friendly lifestyle as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Ukraine.



Peace Corps Ukraine

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Window Gardening 101— Betsy Ott, g. 37 Skole, L'vivs'ka Oblast

Got free window space and a green thumb? Check out the following easy tips for growing your own window garden!

What to Plant?

This depends on what you like or can use. Most herbs, flowers and some garden plants grow well in container gardens. Large vegetables and invasive herbs (dill, chervil, mints and tarragon) should be grown in separate pots, while most other herbs can be combined with others.

Herbs: lavender, sage, thymes, rosemary, basil, parsley, marjoram, dill, hops, sorrel, lemon balm, bay, sweet basil, lemon verbena, peppermint, spearmint, jasmine, oregano, chives, parsley

Vegetables: lettuce, onions, carrots, garlic, cabbage, tomatoes, bush and pole beans, peas, scallions, kale, peppers.

Vines: ivy, myrtle, creeping Jenny, sweet potato vine, vinca

Find a Container

The size of your container is really only limited by the size of your windowsill or balcony, however, the larger the container, the better. A big container gives the roots more room to grow and can hold more plants. Herbs and flowers, for example take much less soil and depth than tomatoes, carrots and onions. Whatever container you choose, leave plenty of drainage holes. Too much water and soggy soil can kill your plants. If possible, don't use real dirt – use potting soil (земля), which can be found at flower stores or your local bazaar.

Plant Your Seeds

Fill your chosen container with soil so that there is about an

inch left to the top of the pot. If planting seeds, read the back of the packet to find out how deep they should be buried (usually from a half inch to lightly covered). If you are using seedlings, or already grown plants, dig a hole large enough to cover the entire root system.

Leave a little room right above the roots uncovered. Tamp the dirt down firmly and water.

Put Somewhere

Where you put your pot will depend on what kind of light your plants need. This should also be explained on the back of your seed packet.

North-facing window: choose plants that need less sun such as ferns, ivies, violets, begonias, impatiens, mints, philodendrons.

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Think Green — One Water Filter = One Hundred Benjamins!

How would you like to save a little extra money each month??

Volunteers who use a water filter every day, rather than buying plastic water bottles, can save more than a month's living allowance throughout two years of service. Volunteers who purchase just two liters of water daily (at UAH 4

per bottle) spend about UAH 2,850 in two years of service – 79% more than volunteers who use water filters and replacements.

Even volunteers drinking just one liter of water a day can save about \$100 by switching to reusable water filters. Initial costs for purchasing a reusable

water pitcher and filter range from UAH 50 to UAH 200.

The great news, though, is that even the most expensive brands pay for themselves after a mere month and a half of use. Replacement filters cost an average UAH 55 to 65.

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Window Gardening 101 – Continued

South-facing window: go with sun-loving plants like tomatoes, (most vegetables and herbs will go into this sun-loving category), geraniums, nasturtiums, dahlias, petunias, cacti (and other succulents).

East-facing windows: both sun-loving and shade-loving plants

West-facing windows: plants that need less watering as they will get the heat of the day.

Take Care of Your Garden

Mostly, you just have to let your plants do their thing and grow. When the top inch or so of the soil is dry, water thoroughly until water comes out the drainage

holes. Add some kind of fertilizer ever 2-3 weeks or so during the spring, fall and summer. Also, be sure to clip off the dead parts of your plant.

Enjoy being green year-round!

Ukrainian/Russian Vocabulary

Pot – горщик/ горшок

Seeds – насіння/ семена

Soil – земля/ почва

Depth – глибина/ глубина

Shade – тінь/ тень

Spacing – інтервал/ інтервал

To Plant – саджати/ сажать

To Water – наливати / наливать



With a little luck, a lot of patience, and water, you can have a window garden just like this!

“This is definitely a project PCVs can complete in their own schools!!”

PCV Superhero Spotlight – Megan Trout

We know the water in Ukraine has some nasty stuff in it, and although we can filter it out by using our own water filters at home, unfortunately our little Aqua-for pitchers can't take care of our entire site. Luckily, there is way to help our community know that sweet taste of pure water.

Our PCV Superhero, Megan Trout (Velyka Lepetykha, Khersonska Oblast), recently

created an easy project at her school to provide a water filter in her school's kitchen.

This simple change will provide the students with clean water for their lunches, and reduce their exposure to contaminants in the water. Megan used a \$500 grant from Appropriate Projects to purchase a water-testing kit and a filter that provides clean water for a whole year

to the students.

“This is definitely a project PCVs can complete in their own schools!!” Megan says. The grant writing process takes about a month for writing and approval, and a short closing letter is all that's needed once the project is completed. Compared to a SPA grant, this is lightning fast.

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Think Green – One Water Filter = One Hundred Benjamins!

In addition to saving money, volunteers with water filters help reduce the billions of plastic bottles sent to landfills every year.

The Container Recycling Institute reports that nearly 60 million bottles are thrown away and not recycled every day – in the United States alone. Water filter

cartridges, even if they aren't recycled, create significantly less waste than water bottles in landfills.

The Earth Policy Institute reports that the United States uses roughly 1.5 million barrels of oil each year simply in the production and distribution of plastic water bottles.

The EWG strongly recommends that volunteers invest in a water filter in order to save money and environmental resources.



Don't contribute to this growing problem!

PCV Superhero Spotlight – Megan Trout



Megan Trout—pouring the purified water now available in her school's cafeteria

Megan suggests a few things to make the grant process even easier: confirm all costs before applying, and work with a Ukrainian partner, like a nurse or a science teacher.

To make the project sustainable, Megan recommends having the students contribute to fund-raising. With just a little time and writing, a local school can enjoy the same safe drinking water most American schools enjoy.

Consider completing a project like this at your own site and then send us the details about your success! If you would like to be featured as our next PCV environmental superhero, contact us at enviropice@gmail.com

If you are interested in this project or have questions about completing a similar project at your own site, please contact Megan at megantrout@gmail.com.

Visit the Appropriate Projects website for more details about how to apply for a grant project of your own.

<http://www.appropriateprojects.com/node/485>.

If you want more information on other environmental projects, contact us at enviropice@gmail.com.

EWG Classifieds

Earth Day Manual:

Make every day Earth Day! The shiny 2011 Earth Day Manual is available for download at the EWG website (www.ewgukraine.wikispaces.com), with lesson plans and project ideas. Did you know you can use a children's book to teach about the environment?

Seeking:

People who buy bottles to sell them. The Recycling Task

Force wants to know who will buy used bottles in your community. Sound strange? Well, these buyers resell the bottles, which are then reused. It's recycling, Ukrainian style. If you know of anyone, please send get their contact info and send it to the EWG.

Wanted:

Task Force seeks NGOs. If you know of an environmental NGO in your commu-

nity, nominate them for our Environmental Heroes award. Send nominations to enviropice@gmail.com.

EWG is looking for...

A new PCV Superhero! Tell us about your environmental projects and we'll feature your story in our next newsletter. If you've completed any environmental projects during your service contact us at enviropice@gmail.com.

Your story could be here! Contact us with details about your environmental project and you can be featured as our next PCV Superhero!

About This Newsletter and The Environmental Working Group



This endeavor is brought to you by the Enviro Spice (Outreach) sub-committee of the Environmental Working Group.

The Enviro Spice sub-committee is committed to connecting all Peace Corps volunteers with the EWG so that each and every interested volunteer has the ability to live a productive, environmentally-friendly life during their service as a Peace Corps volunteer in Ukraine.

We are dedicated to sharing information about EWG projects and events, PCV projects, and we hope to help connect PCVs to any and all environmentally-minded projects and possibilities.

We also aim to connect PCVs with local environmental NGOs so that together they can further the work that NGOs and PCVs do in Ukraine.

Contact us at: enviropice@gmail.com.

And find all kinds of free, green resources at our website!

Visit the EWG online at www.ewgukraine.wikispaces.com

Until next time — Stay green!

ENVIROSPICE

AT THE BAZAAR



Sigh, it looks like it's garbage day.

"ORIGINS"



This is the only spice you need for borsch. For Rachel Jackson, it's free.

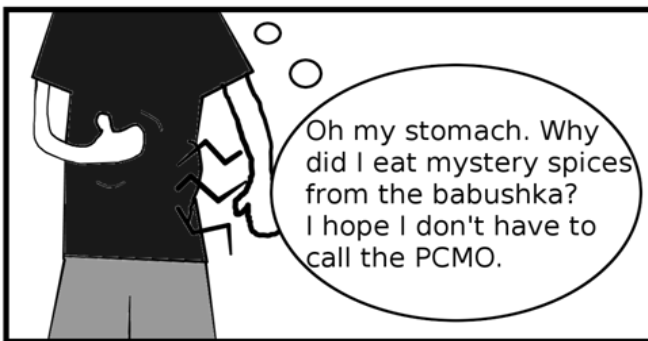
LATER



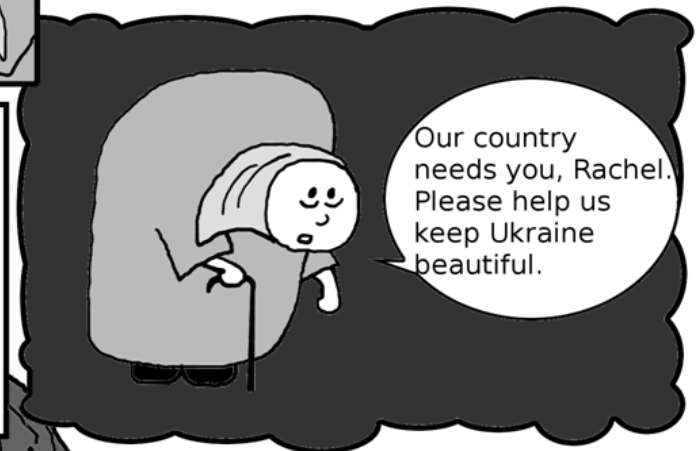
Thanks Babushka I don't know. I guess I will be making borsch for dinner tonight.



I don't know what those spices were, and now this borsch tastes funny.



Oh my stomach. Why did I eat mystery spices from the babushka? I hope I don't have to call the PCMO.



Our country needs you, Rachel. Please help us keep Ukraine beautiful.

THE NEXT MORNING

What a weird dream last night. I bet the borsch had something to do with it. Maybe I should help keep Ukraine beautiful. But how?



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